



ECO ENCOUNTERS
OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Corvids

Lesson Plan

Age Group: Recommended 5-10yo

Time Recommendation: 1-2 hours

Themes: Exploration/ Living Things/ Plants & Animals/ Birds

Objectives: Students will:

- Explore a garden or local green area nearby
- Become familiar with some common corvid birds
- Learn to recognize simple differences between corvids
- Produce art that emphasizes these differences

Key Words Include:

Animal, bird, corvid, feathers, beak, wing, intelligence



Correlation to Ireland/UK Curriculums:

UK:

Science (Year 1): seasonal changes in the local environment/ common names of plants & flowers/ animal habitats

Design & Technology (key stages 1 & 2): using tools and natural materials in a range of relevant contexts

Ireland:

6-SESE – NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS – the local natural environment

5-SPHE – MYSELF – self-awareness, decision-making

4-THE ARTS – CONSTRUCTION – making constructions, looking & responding

3-PE- OUTDOOR & ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES – walking, understanding & appreciating games

NOTE: This lesson plan is designed for mixed age/ability groups, in particular families home-educating during lockdown. As such activities can be carried out in different ways with people of different age groups depending on ability.

Preparation: Let the group know that they will be having an outdoor mini adventure! Make sure everyone is dressed for the occasion. Being outside is always fun as long as everyone is dressed to be warm and dry in cool weather or with a hat and some water handy when it's hot! And be prepared to get a bit muddy too.

Location: These activities are best carried out in a garden, or a nearby green area during a walk. Even the smallest green area will prove to be a home to animals and plants of some kind with a bit of exploration, patience, and excitement.

Introduction: Get started by watching the Eco Encounters introduction video for this lesson here:

<https://ecoencounters.wixsite.com/ecoe/post/lesson-plan-corvids>



This will give students an idea of what corvids might be around and how to tell them apart.

Equipment: this can be done with very little, however it is helpful if you have:

- binoculars (useful but not necessary)
- a printed copy of the spotter's sheet below
- paper (coloured or blank)
- glue/paint

Experience: after watching the video, you should have some ideas about what kind of corvids you might be able to spot in your garden, on your street, or on a short walk. Great places to look include:

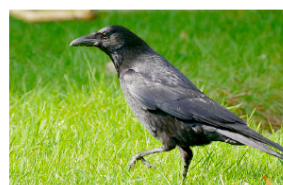
- telephone poles & wires
- chimneys and aerials/antennae
- trees and greens

Reflecting on (Thinking about) the Experience:

-On the webpage we have a simple CORVID SPOTTER'S sheet which you can download and print! It shows some of the most common corvids you're likely to see in most part of Ireland or the UK. You can print one out and tick off how many of each kind you see or open the page in a phone and keep count that way!



Hooded Crow_____



Carrion Crow_____



Application: It's time to get creative! In the video on the webpage, we show you how to make some simple handprint corvids! We painted our hands black and made handprints, then cut those out and glued them to coloured paper. Lastly we used more paint and some bits and pieces to differentiate the different kinds of corvids that we saw. This can be done with some simple household stationary, but feel free to get creative and use whatever you have around the house!





Conclusion: Students should notice that corvids come in different varieties and that the differences can be spotted easily with a little practise! Also, students should notice that many corvids live together in groups and that they are very intelligent animals. Some of their behaviours can also be recognised: carrying twigs to make a nest, defending their territory, hiding (caching) food, and that these behaviours depend on the time of year (seasonal).

Extensions/Resources: As always, an extension to this lesson could be recording (and drawing) any corvids seen in your nature diary!

Links For Further Learning:

A nice rundown of crows and other corvids in the UK:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/crow-family/>

Video about crows in Ireland:

<https://irelandswildlife.com/know-crows-identify-corvids-bto/>

Youtube documentary about corvid intelligence:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Td-S0fTIGY>